

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-01

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TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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UNCLAS BEIRUT 2787

USIA FOR IOP/M, IBS, IPS, INA

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, XF, LE

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S. MIDEAST PEACE DIPLOMACY

1. SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH LOCAL DISTURBANCES OVERSHADOW ALL OTHER CONCERNS IN WEEKEND PRESS, BEIRUT PAPERS DO DEVOTE SIGNIFICANT COMMENT TO DIPLOMATIC SITUATION IN MIDEAST, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF REPORTED PALESTINIAN-EGYPTIAN DIFFERENCES AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF DETAILS OF SECRETARY'S COMING TRIP. LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR" ATTRIBUTES REPORTED PALESTINIAN-EGYPTIAN CRISIS TO DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS OF PALESTINIAN ROLE IN SOLUTION AND OF SECRETARY'S TRUSTWORTHINESS. LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR" JUSTIFIES TACTICAL ACCEPTANCE OF PARTIAL SETTLEMENTS AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT COMPROMISE STRATEGIC GOALS. PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" WARNS THAT REQUIREMENTS OF MEDIATION SHOULD NOT BECOME PRETEXT FOR FREEZING SITUATION IN MIDEAST. INDEPENDENT "AL-BAYRAQ", ON OTHER HAND, ASKS ITSELF WHETHER RESULTS OF SECRETARY'S COMING TRIP WILL SATISFY SYRIA ENOUGH TO FORESTALL IMMEDIATE RETURN TO GENEVA. PFLP WEEKLY ORGAN "AL-HADAF" AND PRO-IRAQI "AL-LIWA"

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ATTACK EGYPT AND CALL FOR PALESTINIAN AND SYRIAN REJECTION

OF "SURRENDERIST" SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR" COLUMNIST ABD AL-KARIM ABU AN-NASR WRITES: "WHEN DR. KISSINGER ARRIVES IN AREA, HE WILL FIND 'CRISIS' BETWEEN EGYPT AND PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP.... OVER HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL AND CONFRONT INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL MOVES, ESPECIALLY AMERICAN ONES.... WILL PLO PARTICIPATE IN PEACE PROCESS OR NOT? AND HOW CAN THIS OCCUR IF AMERICA REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE PLO AND, THUS, TO INCLUDE IT IN PEACE PROCESS...? WILL ARAB STATES, ESPECIALLY EGYPT, PUT ENOUGH PRESSURE ON AMERICAN TO CHANGE ITS STAND AND RECOGNIZE ROLE FOR PLO THAT ARABS AND MOST OTHER STATES OR WORLD HAVE RECOGNIZED? THIS IS ISSUE NOW. DURING HIS LAST TOUR... KISSINGER APPEARED INTRANSIGENT VIS A VIS PLO.... IT WAS IN THIS FRAMEWORK THAT PLO EXCOMM ISSUED ITS STATEMENT, WHICH WAS DIRECTED NOT AGAINST EGYPT, BUT AGAINST KISSINGER'S POLICY.... ONE SIDE TRUSTS KISSINGER'S MOVES, AND OTHER SIDE DOES NOT.... IF KISSINGER THINKS THAT SUCH A 'CRISIS' WILL FACILITATE HIS MISSION IN SHORT TURN, OBJECTIVE LOOK AT MATTERS WILL GIVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENCE PICTURE. EGYPTIAN-PALESTINIAN CRISIS CAN BE OF NO HELP IN CREATING ATMOSPHERE CONDUCIVE TO ACHIEVEMENT OF ANY TRUE PROGRESS ON ROAD TO ... PEACE."

3. LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIRZ" WRITES: "PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL FROM ANY OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY IS NOT TO BE REJECTED, FROM SINAI OR GOLAN OR WEST BANK IS NOT TO BE REJECTED, PROVIDED THAT IT NOT BE TACTIC AT EXPENSE OF STRATEGIC GOAL -- IN OTHER WORDS, THAT IT NOT BE ISRAELI-AMERICAN LURE DESIGNED TO FRAGMENT ARAB POWER ... AND EFFECT ABANDONMENT OF PALESTINE CAUSE IN EXCHANGE FOR RETURN OF MOST OR ALL OF ARAB TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967."

4. PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" WRITES IN LEAD EDITORIAL: "ARABS DID NOT ENTER OCTOBER WAR ... TO MOVE FROM NO-WAR NON-PEACE SITUATION OF 1967-1973 INTO PERMANENT CEASEFIRE SITUATION ON PRETEXT THAT MEDIATION IS CONTINUING. ARABS FOUGHT FOR EVACUATION AND RESTORATION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS 'IMMEDIATELY'. THIS 'IMMEDIATELY' IS INTERNATIONAL WISH CONTAINED IN SC RESOLUTION. NEITHER KISSINGER NOR ANY ARAB UNCLASSIFIED

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OFFICIAL CAN SUBSTITUTE 'STEP BY STEP' FOR IT."

5. INDEPENDENT "AL-BAYRAQ" WRITES: "INFORMED OBSERVERS SAY THAT ... LISSINGER'S MISSION WILL NOT BE RESTRICTED TO DRAWING UP FINAL LINES OF SINAI AGREEMENT, BUT WILL ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE TALKS HE BEGAN IN ISRAEL ON ACHIEVING DEGREE OF WITHDRAWAL IN GOLAN WILL AMERICAN OFFER OF CERTAIN WITHDRAWAL IN GOLAN BE ENOUGH TO CONVINCE SYRIANS TO DELAY

GOING TO GENEVA SO AS TO AWAIT COMPLETION OF NEW 'KISSINGERIAN STEP'?"

6. PFLP WEEKLY ORGAN "AL-HADAF" WRITES IN LEAD EDITORIAL: "AFTER KISSINGER'S LAST VISIT AND APPEARANCE OF HIS PLAN TO WIDEN EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI 'DISENGAGEMENT' SO AS TO REMOVE EGYPT FROM FIELD OF WAR AND DRAW IT IN DIRECTION OF RECOGNIZING ISRAEL ... SOME PARTIES TO SETTLEMENT -- ESPECIALLY SYRIANS AND PALESTINIANS -- EXPRESSED THEIR 'APPREHENSIONS' OVER THIS PLAN NO DOUBT THESE PARTIES ... WISH TO SUGGEST THEIR EXISTENCE IN HOPE OF BEING ABLE TO NEUTRALIZE ARAB AND PALESTINIAN POPULAR REACTION ... AND THEN CUT IT SHORT THROUGH PRESSURE OF FAIT ACCOMPLI ACHIEVED ON EGYPTIAN FRONT OR ON EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN FRONTS TOGETHER TEST OF THESE 'APPREHENSIONS' AND THEIR ACCEPTANCE BY MASSES AND REVOLUTIONARY FORCES AS RETREAT FROM SETTLEMENT CANNOT OCCUR MERELY THROUGH RAISED VOICES, BUT THROUGH SERIOUS MOVES TO RESIST SETTLEMENT. SUCH MOVES CANNOT COME ABOUT BY LOITERING AT DOORS OF OIL AND NON-OIL REACTIONARIES OR AT STOOP OF JORDANIAN ROYAL DIWAN, BUT BY RETURN TO MASSES AND REVOLUTIONARY FORCES AND MOBILIZATION OF ALL ENERGIES AGAINST SURRENDERIST SETTLEMENT."

7. IN SEPARATE COMMENT, "AL-HADAF" WRITES: "EGYPTIAN REGIME HAS MOVED FROM STAGE OF ACCEPTING AND RECOGNIZING EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AS 'FAIT ACCOMPLI' TO STAGE OF DEMANDING THAT ISRAEL BECOME AMERICAN BASE.... SADAT MADE THIS PROPOSAL DURING HIS RECENT TALKS WITH DR. KISSINGER IN CAIRO."

8. PRO-IRAQI PRO-REJECTIONIST "AL-LIWA" WRITES IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL: "PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION IS FACING ONE OF MOST DELICATE STAGES IT HAS EVER KNOWN.... FEATURES OF SETTLEMENT TO BE IMPOSED ON REGION HAVE BECOME CLEAR. THIS SETTLEMENT WILL BE AT EXPENSE OF PALESTINIAN CAUSE.... EVERYTHING THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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SOME PEOPLE HAD BEEN REPEATING OVER AND OVER ABOUT PALESTINIAN ROLE IN SETTLEMENT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN COVER FOR THEIR HUMILIATING CONCESSIONS TO ENEMY. ALSO, JORDANIAN AND WEST BANK SCENE IS WITNESSING FEVERISH MOVES DESIGNED TO REVERSE COURSE OF HISTORY. HOWEVER MUCH SOME MAY TRY TO AVOID FACING FACTS, RESISTANCE TO REGIME IN JORDAN REMAINS ONE OF OUR CONCERNS.... MANIFESTATION OF FEATURES OF AMERICA PLOT NOW SIMPLIFIES EXPANSION OF CIRCLE OF FRIENDS AND MOBILIZATION OF MANY FORCES TO OPPOSE IT. PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION CAN PLAY PRINCIPAL ROLE IN CREATING BROAD ARAB NATIONALIST FRONT TO OPPOSE SURRENDERIST SOLUTION.... ANY EFFORT TO CREATE SYRIAN-IRAQI-PALESTINIAN FRONT WOULD BE MAJOR STEP IN THIS REGARD. NO SHOULD WE NEGLECT ROLES OF OTHER ARAB NATIONALIST FORCES SUCH AS LIBYA AND ALGERIA."

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